

REMARKS

Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1-8 and 10-12 are pending in the present application. The Office has stated that prior claims 8 and 9 would be allowable if written in independent form. Accordingly, without prejudice or disclaimer, and solely to facilitate prosecution, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate all of the limitations of prior claim 9, and claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form. Claims 2-7 are all dependent on claim 1, which the Office should now find allowable. Newly added claims 10-12 mirror claims 5-7 and are also dependent on amended claim 8, which should also be found allowable. Thus, no new matter has been added and all of the claims should now be found allowable.

Upon entry of the amendments, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Kauppinen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,994,113) or Umitsuki (EP 0 967 286) in view of Murakami et al. (EP 0 427 385), are rendered moot because the Examiner has already found prior claims 8 and 9 allowable in view of these references.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and the timely allowance of the pending claims. If this paper does not put the claims in condition for allowance, Applicants earnestly request that the Examiner contact the undersigned at (202) 408-4294 to schedule an interview.

The undersigned has been given limited recognition under 37 C.F.R. § 10.9(b) to prosecute this patent application. That document granting limited recognition is enclosed herewith.

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Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge
any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Expires: August 16, 2003



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